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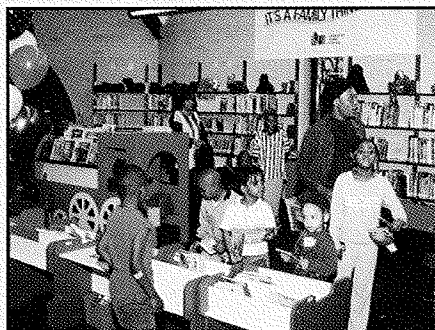
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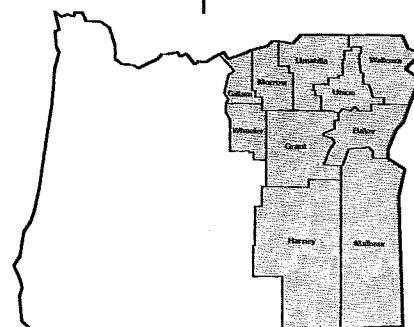
RESOURCES FOR THE UNDERSERVED



Young Learners



Urban Families



Rural Residents

In this Issue

Ten Years and Growing

*A Ramp Won't Help: Services to Adult
Patrons with Learning Disabilities*

*The Library Benchmark:
A Tool for Improving Service to
those Underserved by Public Libraries*

... and more!

Spring 1999

Vol 5 • No 1

*Oregon Library
Association*

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OLA QUARTERLY

Resources for the Underserved

With all the excitement and emphasis on technology concerns in the world of libraries and information today, we wanted with this issue to highlight developments taking place in a different realm. There are encouraging efforts focusing on meeting the unserved or underserved library service needs of constituencies that may have gone previously unnoticed and unsolicited. According to Oregon State Library data, over ten percent of Oregon's population falls into these categories. In this issue *OLA Quarterly* features diverse challenges to providing critical services to those in our communities who need us most but have difficulty in securing those services. These articles offer examples of creativity and thoughtful planning resulting in the implementation of effective programs that address these needs.

Articles in this issue include a discussion of the challenges facing learning disabled patrons and recommendations for increasing their success in using library services; the innovative ways in which technology is connecting isolated patrons and shrinking distances in eastern Oregon; examples of how one established program and a newly developed one in urban communities are working to better the chances for children's educational success through literacy programs; a model for responding to the need of a specific population within an urban community to preserve and access its history; and, a review of the library benchmark, one of the Oregon benchmarks, which supports the goal of providing adequate library services to all of the state's citizens.

We hope that these articles will inspire all of us to acknowledge the changing characteristics and needs of our communities and will encourage us to be innovative in responding to them.

Kristen Kern, Portland State University
Wendy Stewart, Portland State University
Guest Editors

www.olaweb.org

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Correction

The Winter 1999 issue of OLA Quarterly should have been labeled Volume 4 Number 4, but we inadvertently labeled it Volume 5 Number 1. The current issue is the real Volume 5 number 1. We apologize for any inconvenience to your catalogs that our error may cause!

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SPRING 1999 1

Ten Years and Growing

by Donna Dengel
Senior Program
Development Specialist
Multnomah County Library

Early Childhood Resources is a unique combination of outreach programs and specialized library materials serving children pre-birth to kindergarten, their families and caregivers. By providing an environment rich in language, through talking, listening and reading to children, parents and caregivers build the experiential and linguistic foundations necessary for future reading and educational success. These experiences also encourage bonds between the child and adult that foster confidence and a strong sense of self for the child. For the adult, focusing attention on a child's language and literacy activities encourages a heightened sensitivity to the developmental and individual needs of the child. The goal of all the *Early Childhood Resources* outreach programs is to support parents and caregivers in this process. All programming and materials are developed around the principles of developmentally appropriate practices with sensitivity to diverse populations.

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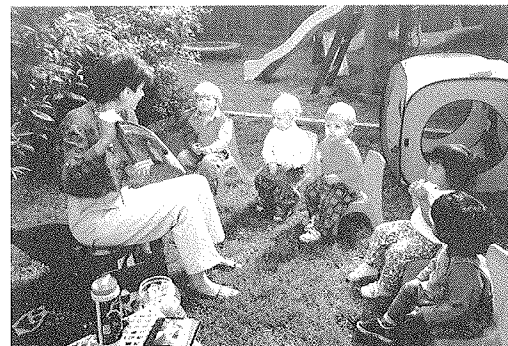
Multnomah County Library youth librarians provide traditional services to children through storytimes in the library and in child care centers or Head Start programs. What separates *Early Childhood Resources* programs from these traditional library services, is the emphasis on adults. While some *Early Childhood Resources* programs are presented to children, they are done so as a modeling or training for adults. Caregivers and families have the greatest influence on a child's consistent literacy development, but adults must first see the need for early language and literacy activities. The recent brain development research has created a new sense of urgency and understanding of early literacy experiences.

An Oregon State Library 1988 *Library Services and Construction Act* (LSCA) grant called *Reaching For Reading* initiated the services to the early childhood community. This \$27,000 beginning grant provided a rotating book collection to 60 child care centers and Head Start programs. It also included two training sessions for early childhood staff to encourage use of books in the classroom. *Early Childhood Resources* has grown over the past ten years, in spite of lean financial times, because the programs are considered vital to the community. The Portland Multnomah Progress Board's *Children's Readiness to Learn: Strategies for Improvement* (1998) report emphasizes the need for early language and literacy development, while recognizing the Multnomah County Library as the only source for such programs in the county. The original half-time Early Childhood Specialist position has grown to three full-time Early Childhood Specialists who are educated in child growth and development, curriculum planning and

adult education. Two clerical/delivery staff take the Library out the front door and into the community.

PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Parent Education Program is an outreach program designed to provide parents with a positive model of sharing books with children, to encourage parents to read regularly to children and to help create a love of books in children. The program coordinator visits social service agencies on a regular basis. These agencies include county parent/child development centers, high school teen parent classes, substance abuse programs, and domestic violence shelters. Information about emergent liter-



Renea Arnold, Parent Education Program coordinator, reads with toddlers at a local agency.

acy is presented to the parents and a developmentally appropriate storytime provided to their children. Parents are encouraged to visit their neighborhood library, meet the youth librarian and explore the children's literature sections. Some of the agencies also receive books through the book delivery program described later in this article.

The Born to Read project, a national early literacy program for at-risk, expectant parents under the auspices of the American Library Association, is an integral part of the Parent Education Program. The program coordinator gives presentations at high school teen parent programs and other agencies in the County that assist at-risk parents. The goal is to motivate parents to read to their children before and after they are born. Parents who participate in the presentation can visit the library and receive free incentive books including the **Eensy Weensy Rhyme Book*, developed for the program. Newborns receive the ever popular Born To Read T-shirt. The project was started with an Oregon State Library LSTA grant, which included the production of two videos, **Born to Succeed* or *La Llave del Exito*. In the videos young parents relay their personal stories about why reading to their babies is important.

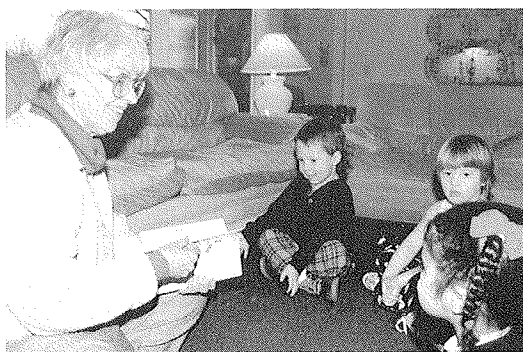
* For information on the videos or rhyme book see: www.multnomah.lib.or.us/lib/entre/ecr.html

CHILD CARE OUTREACH

The Early Childhood Book Delivery Program, the new face of the original grant, now serves 129 child care centers and Head Start programs along with 19 agencies and 60 family child care providers, with numbers growing each month. Every two months a site receives a box of 25 to 50 paperback picture books. Child care providers and agencies have limited preparation time. Having a changing supply of picture books has been a special "gift" to the sites. Interestingly, many staff at the sites report that the delivery services has motivated them to purchase more of their own books and to use the library more often, particularly for specific themes. Visits made by clerical staff to exchange the book collections also offer an opportunity to share information about other library resources.

Parents need reliable, affordable, quality child care. Recent studies have shown that the education and training level of child care providers measurably affects the quality of care for children. The Early Childhood Resources Trainings actively support the early childhood care and education community's effort to improve the quality of care. Trainings are presented at various library sites by area clinicians, Early Childhood Resources and other Youth Services staff. The trainings are specifically designed to meet requirements for state and child care self-certification standards. Training subjects have included health and safety, management and supervision, parent/provider relations, implementing developmentally appropriate practices, professionalism, and curriculum areas such as science, music, circle time activities, puppet making and storytelling. Trainings are hands-on, practical and interactive. Providers can immediately implement what they have gained.

Trainings are also done at the child care sites to support each site's use of the book delivery system. All new child care sites are required to have this training. Other sites receive the training as time allows. The training covers the latest brain development research, language and literacy experiences to support that development, curriculum ideas and promotion of other library resources.



Frances Kinkade, Family Child Care Program coordinator, enjoys working with children in a family child care home.

The Family Child Care Program sends staff and volunteer mentors into family child care homes weekly for four weeks to present a modeling storytime for the children. The mentor assists the provider in using theme-based curriculum tubs that include picture books and teacher aids. By the end of the four weeks the provider is doing the storytime as the mentor observes and offers support. At the completion of the mentorship, the provider is placed on the book delivery program. To participate in the program family child care providers are required to attend a library orientation training that covers basic child development with an emphasis on the latest brain development research, the importance of reading with children, and the details of the program. Additional trainings are provided upon the providers' needs and interests.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Trained volunteers are the backbone of the BOOKS WHILE YOU WAIT PROGRAM, designed to furnish children's books in waiting rooms and lobbies of city, county or state agencies where parents and children are waiting for medical or social services. Picture books and beginning readers are provided in English, Spanish, Russian and Vietnamese.

Agencies report great enthusiasm for the program. Often parents do not bring toys or books from home to deal with the wait, which can sometimes be as much as an hour. Children become bored and parents impatient. The books become a focal point for parents and children to enjoy this waiting time together. If this previously stressful time can have moments of pleasure, it is hoped that the families will repeat this experience at home by reading to their children. Each month volunteers visit approximately 30 agencies to replace and exchange the collections. Sites include county medical, dental and mental health facilities, corrections field offices and jails, Adult and Family Services, and Child and Family Services offices.

The Early Childhood Resource Centers, created for early childhood care and education professionals, offer curriculum, child development and professional development materials, including *It's In The Bag*, an extensive gathering of curriculum materials to be used in the classroom or child care home. Bags are available in English with a few in Spanish. The bags contain three to five picture books, a curriculum guide and a related activity such as a toy, puzzle or flannel board story. The curriculum guides assist teachers in creating a whole experience around the theme. The bags are divided into two age ranges, pre-school and toddler, with books and materials chosen appropriately for each age group. Although designed for early childhood professionals, parents also enjoy the resources. The Centers are located at Albina, Capital Hill, Holgate branch libraries, at Gresham Regional Library and at Central Library with a new site opening at the Midland Regional Library in January.

See Ten Years and Growing page 14

The Cleveland Ohio Public Library is an urban system with a Main Library and twenty-eight branches strategically placed throughout the city of Cleveland. The Cleveland Public Libraries thrive as centers of activities lending 5,525,663 items for home use, answering more than 1,926,720 questions and logging more than 11 million inquiries through the Electronic Library during 1996. During 1996, however, the Cleveland Public Library began to reconsider its role in serving children and families and to juxtapose that role against a struggling public school system and a declining rate of proficiency among elementary school children.

Making the Library Connection for Urban Families

by Sari Feldman

Head of Community Services

and Mercier Robinson

Project Director, Family Learning Connection

Cleveland Public Library

The population of the city of Cleveland is 502,539 (1992 data). The poverty level of the population as a whole is extreme, with Cleveland ranking forty-nine in percent of children who live in "distressed neighborhoods" in 1990 according to a study which examined the demographics of fifty major U.S. cities. (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 1997). The branch library staff had become very familiar with the growing number of children in libraries during non-school hours and the

decline in families using the library together. This social change in library use is particularly critical in areas of extreme poverty. Early childhood research indicates that, "Low literate, poor parents for a variety of economic, social and educational reasons, have a more difficult time in establishing these conditions (the behaviors and attitudes which nurture achievement) for their children (Nickse, Ruth, 1989)." In addition "Low-income families must not now only battle the effects of poverty, but in this information age, in an era in which financial success is increasingly tied to the ability to use computers and gain access to cyberspace, 'It is likely that new

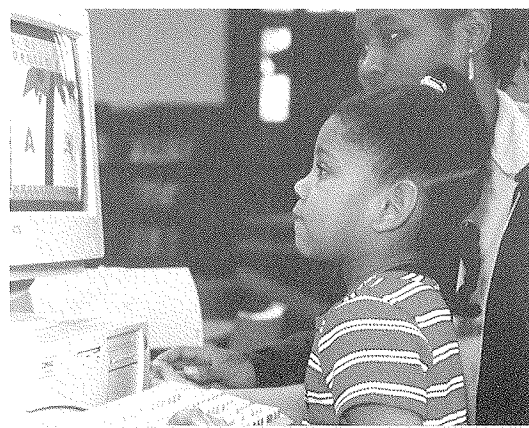
computer technologies will widen the gap between the poor and the well-off.' (Ratan, 1995)." The Board and the Administration of the Cleveland Public Library understood that there was opportunity to begin strengthening services for the children of Cleveland, who must develop strong skills in using information to reach their potential and take advantage of America's opportunities. Involving the whole family was a critical element in creating this program for branch libraries. The Family Learning Connection project, a family literacy initiative, was envisioned with increased opportunities for parent-child interactions of reading, playing and using computers together.

THE FAMILY LEARNING CONNECTION PROJECT

In 1997 the Cleveland Public Library received federal Library Services and Construction Act funding through the State Library of Ohio and with a match of Library funds were able to initiate the Family Learning Connection. The project was introduced at two branches in high-poverty neighborhoods and moneys were used to purchase computers with furniture, early childhood materials including toys, furniture, and a large collections of board books as well as software and promotional materials. A Project Director was hired as permanent, full-time staff for the Community Services Department. The branches, Carnegie West and Hough, used a rich array of developmentally appropriate materials, family programs and incentives to motivate children and their families. Branch staff and volunteer tutors assisted children with homework and skill building in the areas of reading and mathematics.

The two branches received a face lift and in the early childhood areas, additional computers with software, new furnishings, and toys provided a clearly defined space to welcome families to the library. The furniture and educational toys purchased for the project changed the entire mood of each branch and the early childhood areas were successful in attracting parents and/or care givers with their children. The areas offered an opportunity for communication and interaction between parent and child with the time spent ranging from a few minutes to an hour. Overall, families visited the two branches more often and stayed for longer periods of time to share books, play with a toy or use a computer. Daycare and Headstart groups also enjoyed using the areas.

The staff at the Carnegie West and Hough branches cited the computers as the most successful aspect of the project. Computers were in use from the time each branch opened to closing. The computers were primarily used by individual children and groups of children after school and on Saturdays. The software for very young children provided a wonderful opportunity for parents and preschoolers to point, click and explore together. In many cases both parent and children were using a mouse for the very first time.



Cleveland Public Library—The Family Learning Connection (Family Literacy Project), 1998 Carnegie West Branch

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES


The greatest challenge of the project was the need to reach parents and care givers with their children but the greatest opportunity was the establishment of partnerships with more than fifteen community agencies and the Cleveland Public Schools. Networking with like-minded groups enabled the Project Director and the branch staff to refine the project and experiment with techniques to encourage family time at the library. Collaborations were established on two levels. Neighborhood Advisory Boards were formed to have a local voice for recruitment of participants and volunteers, learning activities and programs, and promotion of the project. The advisors in each neighborhood were parents, teachers, school administrators and representatives of independent not-for profits. Other neighborhood organizations and agencies were invited to participate in the new services and promoted activities to their client families.

Forming citywide partnerships and networking with institutions in the Greater Cleveland area increased the Cleveland Public Library's role as an advocate for literacy. A collaboration with Cleveland Reads, the Cleveland-area literacy coalition and the America Reads Challenge program at Cleveland State University were an example of a powerful partnership. The students from the university's America Reads Challenge program were trained by Cleveland Reads and Cleveland Public Library to serve as reading mentors at twenty four-library branches during the Summer Reading Club. The Project Director provided expertise to other agencies and organizations developing their own early childhood and family literacy programs.

FAMILY LEARNING CONNECTION CONTINUES

Based on evaluation of the 1997-98 project conducted by Cleveland State's Urban Child Research Center, and input from community stakeholders, the Library is putting additional effort toward serving families with young children. The evaluation confirmed that the early childhood areas, the computers and the coalition building had the greatest potential for long term impact and increased family activity at branches. The 1998-99 project, still called the Family Learning Connection and funded by the newly named Library Services and Technology Act, will become the first library in Ohio to utilize the concepts of a national project, The Family Place. Libraries for the Future in partnership with the Middle Country (NY) Public Library has developed this successful model for community outreach and programming using a family-centered approach. The Family Place combines traditional literacy support, information literacy through technology and collaborations with partner agencies. Children and their families or care givers will use a full range of library services in four high poverty neighborhoods and the Children's Literature Department at Main Library. There are few other agencies in the city of Cleveland that provide free and without restriction the early childhood literacy support that will be made avail-

able at the Library. The fundamental structure of The Family Place and its focus on parent involvement, access to compelling materials and technology, involvement of resource individuals and flexibility in program structure fits the evolving philosophy of Cleveland Public Library.

We foresee parents and caregivers working enthusiastically with their children to improve all literacy skills. The developmentally appropriate toys, the computers and education software, the Library staff support, the community resource people and the volunteer tutors will create a learning environment that is inviting, motivating, and valuable to inner city families. 

Visit the Cleveland Public Library homepage at www.cpl.org

Sari Feldman is Head of Community Services at Cleveland Public Library. Mercier Robinson is the Project Director for Family Learning Connection at Cleveland Public Library.

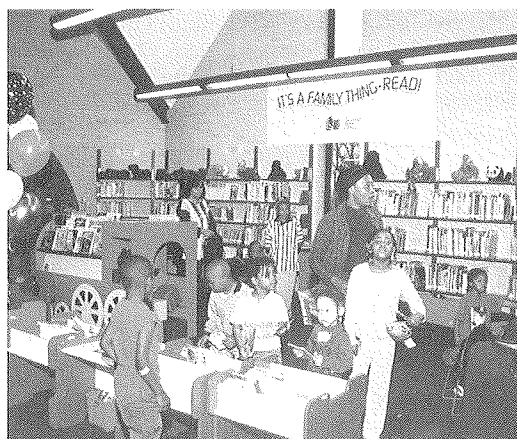
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Cleveland Public Library—The Family Learning Connection (Family Literacy Project), 1998 Hough Branch

Eastern Oregon University's (Eastern) mission is to serve the educational, social, cultural, and economic needs of the ten eastern-most counties in Oregon through high quality programs of instruction, research, and service. Pierce Library, on Eastern's campus, supports the University's mission by providing information retrieval, resource sharing and consortia building to a multitude of libraries in eastern Oregon and subsequently their patrons.

Baker, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa and Wheeler are the ten identified counties of eastern Oregon. The population served is 170,550 and covers an area of 41,178 square miles (*Oregon Blue Book*, 1997).

The small libraries in rural Oregon are challenged by the disadvantages of severely limited budgets due in part to the reduction of timber sales, low population density and geographic isolation. And those in eastern Oregon suffer no differently than their counterparts throughout the state. Holt (1995) conveys that no public library can do everything. But one thing that all modern libraries have to do is to introduce technology into their way of doing business.

Service to Residents and Libraries of Eastern Oregon

by Shirley Roberts

Assistant Library Director

Pierce Library, Eastern Oregon University

With the many challenges facing the residents and libraries of eastern Oregon, Pierce Library has made a commitment to provide improved access to information resources and to support the smaller libraries regarding technology issues. This commitment began in 1986 when Pierce Library founded the Eastern Oregon Information Network (EOIN) through the efforts of Patricia Cutright, then On-line Reference Librarian and Ken Girrard, software developer, with LSCA and Meyer Memorial Trust grants. The network was originally designed to ease communi-

cations among libraries, hospitals and schools of eastern Oregon through improved sharing of resources by placing computers, fax machines and peripherals in 21 multi-type regional libraries. In the years the network has been in place, the variety and complexity of services offered has increased, as has the need for these services. The network now includes the following electronic components: inter-library loan, messaging, regional union serials list and reference request referral. All academic, public, school and special libraries in the ten eastern-most counties are encouraged to participate in the Eastern Oregon Information Network. Currently, participation in the network includes the 3 (100 percent) academic libraries and 22 of the 33 (64 percent) public libraries found in eastern Oregon. School library participants number 35, in addition to the participation of the library from the Snake River Correctional Facility. Today the most utilized component of the network is interlibrary loan with 4,873 requests for materials placed during the last fiscal year (July 1997 to June 1998).

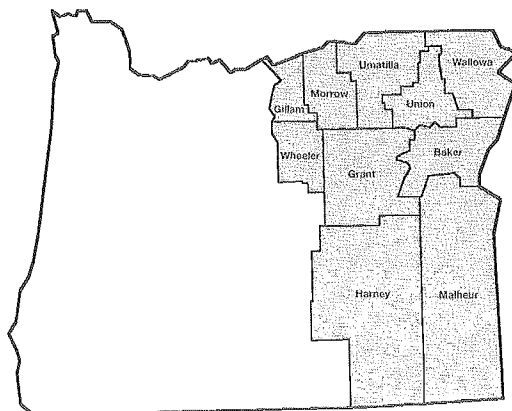
A grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Title IID, in 1989 allowed the implementation of a state-of-the-art CD-ROM system. This system was merged with the EOIN to facilitate information access; licensing allowed service not only for the regional libraries but also to the residents of eastern Oregon who were taking classes off-campus from Eastern.

In 1994 Pierce Library was identified as the library to provide reference services to eastern Oregon citizens for the Oregon Reference Link program. Not only has the Reference Link program been active in answering referred reference questions [56 percent of the high schools in the region referred questions during the 1997 calendar year, with 61 percent of the public libraries having referred questions during the same period] but has also been involved in training library personnel in the ten county region on such topics of collection development, resource sharing, reference interview techniques, Internet as a reference tool, and how to utilize available technology within the library.

Pierce Library promotes partnerships and collaborative efforts among libraries in eastern Oregon that will benefit the rural citizens they serve. In 1993, LSCA funding was received for a library automation project that established the Pioneer Library System. This project integrated the holdings of two public libraries (La Grande Public and Baker County Public) and Pierce Library's, enhancing the cooperative efforts started in 1986 with EOIN. This collaborative effort increased the availability of information resources for the citizens of eastern Oregon by 80,000 titles and put those titles at their fingertips through the On-line Public Access Catalog (OPAC).

Shortly thereafter, in 1996, Pierce Library and the Pioneer Library System undertook their next collaborative effort and invited public and school libraries in Baker, Grant, Union and Wallowa counties to par-

Ten counties in Eastern Oregon have been identified as having underserved populations



ticipate in building a regional union catalog by adding collections to the Pioneer Library System OPAC. The majority of the libraries invited were able to participate and with LSCA funding a more unified, larger and diverse collection of information was created for the residents of eastern Oregon. The participating libraries include:

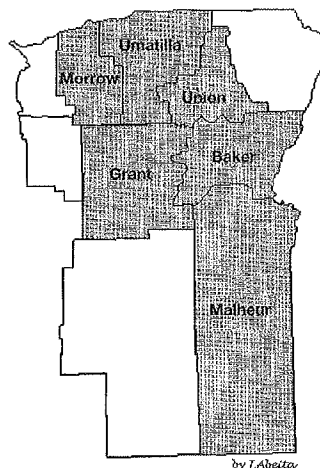
- **Cove:** Cove Public Library and Cove School Library
- **Elgin:** Elgin Public Library and Elgin Schools Library
- **Imbler:** Imbler School Library
- **John Day:** Grant County Public Library
- **La Grande:** Central Elementary School Library, Greenwood Elementary School Library, Island City Elementary School Library, Riveria Elementary School Library, La Grande Middle School Library and La Grande High School Library.
- **North Powder:** North Powder City Library and Powder Valley School Library
- **Union:** Union Public Library and Union School Library

The different types of library participants with academic, public and schools involved creates a uniquely diverse collection that will be of great value not only to the residents of eastern Oregon but to the entire state. Linking this dynamic collection to the EOIN interlibrary loan service, with OCLC as a backup, Pierce Library provides all eastern Oregon libraries the ability to better serve their patrons in the retrieval of information resources.

With the Internet and graphical user interfaces becoming more commonplace, readily and easily recognized, and used by the general public, Pierce Library transferred the Pioneer Library System text-based OPAC to a Web version in January 1998. Access to the regional union catalog and the EOIN is now directly available from Pierce Library's home page (www.pierce.eou.edu). Also available from that same home page are other information resources, such as government documents, library catalogs, etc., which residents in eastern Oregon can access from the Internet.

Pierce Library is always looking for ways to expand its collection to provide access to more information resources. In August 1998, 2800 linear feet of shelving was installed adding nearly 9,000 volumes to its collection in the areas of art, animal husbandry, gardening, music, foreign languages, sports and recreation and folklore. Sixteen thousand more volumes are to be integrated by Fall 1999 in the areas of literature and history. The Oregon State Library provided these titles in order to make them available to the citizens of eastern Oregon.

What the future is for rural residents of eastern Oregon and what part Pierce Library, Eastern Oregon University, will play has yet not been fully determined. There are new projects on the horizon such as ORION, a virtual catalog expected to integrate the three regional union catalogs in eastern Oregon (Pioneer Library System, Umatilla/Morrow Library Network and Southeastern Oregon Library Network). This project, spearheaded by the Oregon State library, will include an interlibrary loan component with a patron initiated borrowing component.



1 ORION/Eastern Oregon Project

- Pioneer Library Network —Union, Baker and Grant Counties (Innovative)
- Umatilla/Morrow County Library Network (Ameritech)
- Southeast Oregon Library Network —Malheur County

Project Includes—
 3 academic libraries
 21 public libraries
 35 school libraries

Recently a formal study completed by a group of consultants with LSTA funding explored the possibility of creating a ten-county library district. Metz, et al. (1998) agree that a ten county library district for eastern Oregon could

- serve a larger area than any public library in the United States, excluding Alaska (41,178 square miles)
- serve a larger area than five New England states combined (New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut)
- serve 43 percent of the area in Oregon
- serve the third largest population in the State of Oregon after the Multnomah County Library and the Salem Public Library
- provide a new national model for quality public library services to rural communities in the 21st century

Kniffel (1996) proclaims that underserved populations inhabit cities, as well as rural areas. In fact, "underserved" could include just about everybody in the world. For many years, a concerted effort has been undertaken to provide information access and resources to the rural residents of eastern Oregon.

See Service to Residents page 15

Many people assume that the term learning disabled is synonymous with mental retardation. This is not true. Learning disabled (LD) instead, refers to people often of average or above-average intelligence who suffer from disorders in processing or understanding written or spoken language or mathematical symbols (Stage and Milne, 1996). These conditions affect between 3 percent and 15 percent of the population. Perhaps the best-known form of LD is dyslexia, or difficulty reading;

but dysgraphia, difficulty writing, and dyscalculia, difficulty with numeric or mathematical calculations, are also common. Since these disabilities are by their nature idiosyncratic and invisible, services for people with LD are often overlooked in a library's overall program planning. This situation has also been made worse by the popular perception of LD as a childhood disorder that primarily affects school performance. There is now

a growing understanding that children with LD grow up to be adults with LD; adults who often require special skills and additional services to reach their full potential.

Stage and Milne's exploratory study suggests that students with LD may use the library more frequently and for longer periods than do their non-disabled peers. Similarly, MacInnis (1996) found almost three-quarters of the university students with LD interviewed had used a public library within the last year.

Adults who are not attending school may also have powerful reasons to use the library. Clausen (1997) suggests that the diminishment of jobs in the manufacturing sector, and the need for increased proficiency with computers and related technology, is requiring many adults to acquire new vocational skills. Adults with LD may be disproportionately affected by these changes, having selected such jobs to avoid extensive reading and writing.

The first step to providing improved services for people with LD is learning the nature of the challenge. Library staff can use resources such as the American Library Association's *Roads to Learning* web site or the *Best Information on the Net Disability Resources* page to gain more insight into the nature of LD and other invisible disabilities. Making public displays about LD - perhaps for National Disabled Employment Awareness Month in October - may help not only to inform the general public, but to show that library personnel are aware of special needs and available to help. Keeping applications and information about services such as Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic and the regional Library

for the Blind and Physically Handicapped prominently displayed along with other types of library information may also promote awareness and openness.

People with LD have frequently been exposed to stigma and negative labels, and may be used to passing to avoid negative perceptions (Barga, 1996). Stressing confidentiality in library orientations, tours, and promotional materials, along with showing general knowledge and sensitivity regarding disabilities and their effects, will help build trusting relationships and make patrons more comfortable in expressing needed accommodations.

Librarians giving bibliographic instruction, formally or informally, should remember to use both visual and auditory presentations of material wherever possible. In more formal settings, such as class lectures, community presentations, or structured consultations, it is simple to ask registrants to indicate whether they need special accommodations (a front-row seat or the ability to tape-record a lecture are common examples of accommodations that are often helpful). User guides and bibliographies can be made available in alternate formats as well, perhaps audiocassette or, for the truly ambitious, in a multimedia computer format with streaming audio, if your library has staff with the expertise to create it. When you do use printed materials, try to use graphics and typefaces that provide a clean, simple, and elegant look. Libraries that provide computer workstations for Internet surfing may wish to add voice-output software to make them easier to use for patrons with reading problems.


When providing materials in response to a patron's request, try to think of alternate formats for the information. Is the same or similar material available on audiocassette, Web site, book and community resource file? Offer all the formats and see which best suits the patron. The growing popularity of books on cassette is undoubtedly a boon for the adult with LD as well as the long-haul commuter. Be careful though, you should be aware that books on tape, i.e., popular fiction and non-fiction, are often abridged in some way.

When planning continuing education programs, many topics that can be helpful to adults with LD will also be of high interest to the general population. Programs on job searching, career planning,

*We don't have any
of those here, do we?*

*—Response to a patron requesting
information on learning disabilities
at an academic library*

stress reduction, college selection, and Internet use are all likely to be popular programs that can help people with LD compensate for their weaknesses and build new skills in areas of strength. If your library already offers or hosts a literacy program, consider adding materials and approaches that are designed specifically for people with dyslexia. Gorman (1997) describes the logistics of such a program in an article in *American Libraries*.

If many of these ideas sound like extensions of services you already provide, you're quite right. Active listening to patrons, careful selection of materials, attention to confidentiality, and respect for individual differences have always been the hallmarks of good library service. Consistently adhered to, they will help provide a positive environment for patrons with learning disabilities as well. 

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Online resources for information about learning disabilities (and other disabilities):

Association on Higher Education and Disability
www.ahead.org

This organization describes itself as "an international, multicultural organization of professionals committed to full participation in higher education for persons with disabilities." They offer a guide to tutoring programs for people with LD.

Best Information on the Net-Disability Resources

www.sau.edu/cwis/internet/wild/Disabled/disindex.htm

This resource list, compiled by librarians at St. Ambrose University in Davenport, Iowa, is comprehensive and helpful for general information and guides to further research.

Disability Research Monthly's Librarians' Connections

www.geocities.com/~drm/DRMLibs.html

The links on this semi-commercial site will be very helpful to anyone interested in assessing or establishing adaptive services.

Dyslexia: the gift

www.dyslexia.com/

Although it's commercial, this site is important because it presents dyslexia as a positive condition rather than a handicap.

HEATH Resource Center

www.acenet.edu/Programs/HEATH/home.html

This is a government site devoted to information on higher education issues for students with disabilities of all types.

Oregon State Library Talking Book and Braille Services

www.osl.state.or.us/tbabs/tbabs.html

Individuals with learning disabilities are often eligible for Talking Book services.

Roads to Learning

*The public libraries' learning
disabilities initiative.*

www.ala.org/roads/

This site, still under construction as this goes to press, promises to be helpful for public library staff.

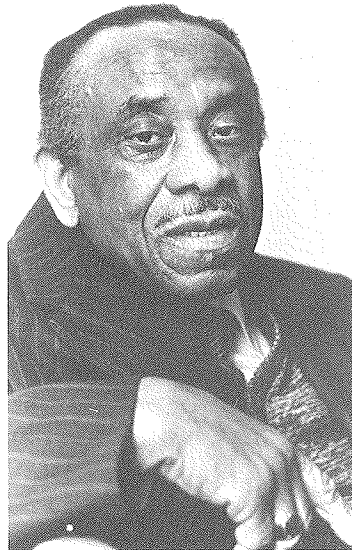
Recent publications have begun to fill the gaps in our libraries and in our national awareness of the contributions of African Americans to the history and development of this country. Such items as the print and audio *Remembering Slavery*, the standard reference work *The Civitas Anthology of American Slave Narratives* (editors William Andrews and Henry Gates, Jr., et al.), and the CD-ROM encyclopedia *Encarta Africana* (coeditor Henry Louis Gates, Jr.) are fulfilling the vision of W.E.B. Dubois, who announced 90 years ago his intention to create

an encyclopedia about Negroes. Added to these publications are some local collections of materials now in development that will expand our understanding of the history of Oregon and the region, and shed light on the population of African Americans who have lived in Oregon from its territorial days to the present.

Many other Americans, African American families and individuals have created collections of personal letters, documents,

and photographs. Some of these items collected by the Portland Black History Project more than 20 years ago were eventually donated to the Oregon Historical Society. Many of these remain uncataloged. Local African American newspapers have been archived at the Oregon Historical Society, the University of Oregon, and other locations, but no single library in the state currently has a complete collection of all the black newspapers published in Portland.

Rev. John H. Jackson
from Archives of Community History Center, Portland Community College, Cascade Campus



In response to the spotty collections of materials and limited access, members of Portland's African American community approached Dr. Mildred Ollee, the Executive Dean of Portland Community College's Cascade Campus, to say that the personal and professional papers of an important member of the community were in need of a home.

The papers of the Rev. John H. Jackson, long-time minister at Mt. Olivet Baptist Church and significant leader in Oregon's civil rights movement, were available to be donated to an institution in the Portland area so that they would be preserved and accessible to people interested in the history of Oregon's African American Community. Although such an archive is unusual for a community college library, Portland Community College, Cascade Campus, is the only public institution of higher education located on the east side of Portland, and people were certain they did not want these materials to leave their community. Additionally, other local individuals in the community had papers, letters, photographs, journals and documents to donate, and personal stories they wished to preserve. Many of these individuals had moved to Portland during the Second World War or shortly thereafter; others had been in Portland even longer, since the 1920s and 1930s and before. Some important members of the community, such as the Rev. Jackson, had already died, and others were frail, so there was some urgency in the request to establish a safe place for historical documents.

The community members expressed particular interest in finding a home for their documents in a center they hoped would be developed within North/Northeast Portland. Creation of such a center, they felt, would represent a significant achievement for people whose history had suffered past neglect from the wider historical community. Dr. Ollee, therefore, in consultation with the college community as well as the neighborhood surrounding the campus, accepted the donation of the Jackson papers as the keystone collection of the Cascade Campus Community History Center. The Center is envisioned as a repository for historical documents, a place for future activities related to recognition of the contributions of African Americans to the city, and an educational resource for students of the college as well as for private citizens. It will, along with the Black Resource Center at the North Portland Branch of the Multnomah County Library, and the recently founded African American Museum project of the Black United Fund, help to fill in the story of minority peoples in Portland and in Oregon. The Black Resource Center will be located at Portland Community College Cascade Campus Library during renovation of the North Portland branch to ensure continued accessibility.

The Jackson collection (consisting of more than three decades-worth of sermons, correspondence, photographs, organizational papers from local non-
See Serving the Minority page 15

The Library Benchmark

A Tool for Improving Service to those Underserved by Public Libraries

by Mary Ginnane

Group Leader, Library Development Services
Oregon State Library

The Oregon Progress Board has published the Oregon Benchmarks since 1991. The Oregon State Library submitted a library benchmark to the effort. The library benchmark provides a means to identify where citizens are underserved by public libraries. Strategies for improvement of those libraries can then be planned and implemented by local leaders.

BACKGROUND

Governor Neil Goldschmidt's administration instituted the concept of Oregon Benchmarks, setting measurable standards for progress in education, the economy, and quality of life in Oregon. The Benchmarks grew directly from Oregon Shines, a 20 year strategic vision for Oregon developed in 1989. The Oregon Progress Board invited state agencies to suggest benchmarks, and the State Library submitted a library benchmark to the first Benchmarks effort in 1991. The Public Library Division of the Oregon Library Association assisted the State Library with the minimum service criteria for the library benchmark improved upon for the second publishing of the Oregon Benchmarks in late 1992.

The Oregon Progress Board accepted the library benchmark as an important indicator of a livable Oregon. The library benchmark continues to be included in the Oregon Benchmarks despite an effort to pare down the overall number of benchmarks. The Progress Board worked with the State Library on benchmark targets to achieve by the year 2000, and the year 2010. They biennially request progress reports from the State Library based on the most recent data available. The "Oregon Public Library Statistical Report" is the data source for calculating progress on achieving the library benchmark. State Library staff also processed past data from public libraries against the minimum service criteria in order to establish an historical picture to contribute to the analysis of progress.

THE LIBRARY BENCHMARK

The Progress Board's latest biennial report to the Legislature is entitled, *Achieving the Oregon Shines II*

Vision 1999 Benchmark Report. The library benchmark is worded as follows, "Percentage of Oregonians served by a public library which meets minimum service criteria." The "Endnotes" section of the Progress Board's report notes the benchmark's importance by saying, "Public libraries make major contributions to achieving the Oregon Benchmarks by providing educational resources and services to preschool children, by providing information to students, businesses, and citizens, and by contributing to the quality of life in communities throughout Oregon." The historical, current, and target percentages listed in the 1999 report are shown in Table 1.

MINIMUM SERVICE CRITERIA

The minimum service criteria established for the library benchmark are less rigorous than "Standards for Oregon Public Libraries", the Oregon Library Association's voluntary standards that were last revised in 1994. The benchmark criteria set a modest bar for public libraries in the areas of governance, public service hours, staffing, collection size, and children's services. The minimum service criteria are:

- 1) The library is legally established and makes basic services available to citizens within its tax-supporting service area without charge;
- 2) The library is open a minimum of 20 hours per week;

Historical	
1980	73%
1990	86%
1991	83%
1992	83%
1993	86%
1994	84%
1995	85%
1996	88%
1997	89%
Current	
1997	89%
Target	
2000	90%
2010	99%

Table 1: The Library Benchmark:
Actual and Future Targets

- 3) Staff consists of one paid staff person per 4,000 persons in service area or .5 FTE, whichever is greater, and populations over 10,000 must have a full-time paid professional librarian (with a Master of Library Science degree);
- 4) Collection is 5,000 books or one volume per capita, whichever is greater;
- 5) Children's programming is provided.

UNSERVED, SERVED, AND UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS

To fully understand the library benchmark it is necessary to distinguish between citizens who have library service and those who don't. Based upon 1996-97 data, there are 5.25 percent of Oregonians who are "unserved" citizens. These 167,000 people live in locations where they do not have the opportunity to support a legally established, tax-funded public library. While these Oregonians may drive to a public library in another jurisdiction and buy a library card, they do not have a library of their own to use and support.

Correspondingly, those Oregonians who do support a tax-funded public library are considered to be served by a public library. For purposes of the library benchmark, "served by" means residing in the service area of a legally established public library which received tax support for providing service. The percentage of Oregonians served by a public library is 94.75 percent.

Once the data from public libraries providing service to Oregonians is compared against the minimum service criteria in the library benchmark, more gradations in classifying citizens' access to library service come into use. "Underserved" citizens are those whose public library does not meet one or more of the criteria. Based upon the library benchmark calculation using 1996-97 public library statistics, 5.61 percent of Oregonians are underserved.

Those Oregonians whose libraries meet the library benchmark criteria, comprising 89.14 percent of the population, can be considered, at a minimum, adequately served. Fortunately, sound local planning, stable governance, larger units of service, and solid funding has moved service far beyond adequate into the excellent level for many Oregonians. Table 2 summarizes the above data about unserved, underserved, and adequately served Oregonians.

Population Base	3,181,000	
Population Served by Libraries	3,013,931	94.75%
Population "Unserved"	167,069	5.25%
Population "Underserved"	178,368	5.61%
Population Adequately Served	2,835,563	89.14%

Table 2: Oregon's Population by Type of Library Service: 1996-1997

FINDINGS ABOUT THE LIBRARY BENCHMARK

Last fall, when the Oregon Progress Board asked for the current progress report on the library benchmark, State Library staff plugged 1996-97 data into a spreadsheet that compared the data against the minimum service criteria. In a few cases where data is missing, estimates based on previous years are developed. The headquarter offices of library cooperatives that do not provide direct library service are deleted. The progress report showed that 31 of 129 legally established public libraries did not meet one or more of the minimum service criteria. As previously mentioned in this article, 5.61 percent of Oregonians or 178,368 citizens can currently be designated as underserved. Table 3 shows how that number of underserved breaks out by library.

Reviewing the current and past progress reports about the library benchmarks leads to certain findings about unserved citizens and public libraries being identified:

- Consistent with library development experience over the years that smaller jurisdictions of government have difficulty funding libraries adequately due to smaller tax bases, a majority of libraries not meeting the criteria are small libraries. Only 14 of 31 public libraries that serve populations under 2,000 did meet the minimum service criteria, leaving 17 small libraries that did not. Expanding the population size being considered up to 5,000 yields the result that 68 percent of the libraries (21 in number) not meeting the minimum service criteria serve populations under 5,000. The predominant criteria not met by the smaller libraries are: 1) offering a minimum of 20 public service hours per week; and 2) employing the minimum of .5 FTE staffing (which is greater for this size library than the criterion of staff per 4,000).
- Meeting the collection size criterion does not appear to present a problem for any size of Oregon library. Only one library's collection is undersized to the extent that it does not satisfy the criterion.
- Improvements have been noted over the years in the number of libraries meeting the criterion for providing children's programming. Only ten public libraries reported offering one or none children's programs. In 1992-93, 18 libraries reported offering one or none children's programs. The 1992-93 year is significant because it precedes the establishment of the Ready to Read state aid grant program, and is prior to the State Library's youth services consulting program beginning. Library Development staff hypothesize that the increased emphasis on youth services in the state, and the availability of targeted consulting, has assisted in increasing the number of libraries offering children's programming.

Official Name	Population Served	Service Hours	Total Staff	Staff per 4000	ALA/MLS	Total Volumes	Children's Programs	Underserved Population
Agness Library District	173	14.00	.35	8.09	0.00	12,323	22	173
Helix Public Library	284	12.00	.44	6.20	0.00	7,448	50	284
Ukiah Public Library	321	15.50	.50	6.23	0.00	15,789	35	321
Wallowa County Library	372	15.00	1.30	13.98	0.00	16,101	131	372
Adams Public Library	400	13.00	.28	2.75	0.00	2,685	0	400
Fossil Public Library	515	6.00	.15	1.17	0.00	3,645	1	515
Yachats Public Library	655	26.00	.00	0.00	0.00	12,977	78	655
Scio Public Library	665	18.00	.45	2.71	0.00	10,671	count not available	665
Arlington Public Library	723	14.00	.30	1.66	0.00	16,881	8	723
Echo Public Library	815	20.00	.70	3.44	0.00	10,839	0	815
Southern Wasco County Library	887	12.00	.30	1.35	0.00	6,428	0	887
Falls City Public Library	1,027	10.00	.25	0.97	0.00	5,956	0	1,027
Irrigon Public Library	1,090	24.00	.00	0.00	0.00	728	0	1,090
Gilliam County Library	1,177	17.00	.50	1.70	0.00	9,048	26	1,177
Amity Public Library	1,373	15.00	.23	.66	0.00	14,899	3	1,373
Athena Public Library	1,698	10.00	.49	1.15	0.00	10,680	0	1,698
Mary Gilkey Library	1,910	40.00	.25	.52	0.00	11,781	21	1,910
Vernonia Public Library	2,180	20.00	.50	.92	0.00	8,579	73	2,180
Stanfield Public Library	2,697	32.00	.85	1.26	0.00	6,025	0	2,697
Emma Humphrey Library	2,934	20.00	.50	.68	0.00	13,689	1	2,934
Warrenton Community Library	3,940	17.00	.25	.25	0.00	8,430	15	3,940
Umatilla Public Library	5,087	32.00	1.25	.98	0.00	14,500	0	5,087
Milton-Freewater Public Library	9,307	39.00	2.00	.86	1.00	27,609	66	9,307
Astoria Public Library	10,130	59.00	3.38	1.33	0.00	78,622	count not available	10,130
Lebanon Public Library	11,995	55.00	5.33	1.78	0.00	25,575	83	11,995
Stayton Public Library	15,112	45.50	4.61	1.22	0.00	39,619	95	15,112
Crook County Library	15,900	61.00	6.20	1.56	0.00	30,813	319	15,900
Jefferson County Library	16,900	50.00	3.75	.89	1.00	43,387	117	16,900
La Grande Public Library	18,910	46.00	5.40	1.14	0.00	47,090	408	18,910
Sandy Public Library	22,687	57.00	6.00	1.06	0.00	35,263	80	22,687
Woodburn Public Library	26,504	48.00	9.84	1.49	0.40	69,612	64	26,504
Underserved Population								178,368
Count of Libraries								31

Table 3: 1996-1997 Underserved Oregonians from Library Benchmark Report

- Every year incremental growth in public library staffing moves a number of libraries toward satisfying the staffing level criteria of one paid staff person per 4,000 persons in the service area. It is expected that this incremental growth will help a few of the libraries currently not meeting this criterion to satisfy it in the future. However, it is also expected that staff decreases resulting from Measure 47/50 in a few libraries will cause setbacks in meeting this criterion in next year's benchmark progress report.
- The residents of a handful of libraries serving populations over 10,000 persons also end up being categorized as underserved because their jurisdictions have not traditionally employed a professional librarian with a Master of Library Science degree, or have made a decision not to re-employ a professional. Retirements and future hiring decisions will most likely affect this criterion's satisfaction by these libraries.


NEW USES OF THE LIBRARY BENCHMARK

The acceptance of the library benchmark by the Oregon Progress Board, and its ongoing maintenance by the State Library has led to its being used in other ways. The federal Institute of Museum and Library Services that administers the new Library Services and Technology Act stressed the importance of evaluating the use of LSTA funds in each state. The LSCA/LSTA Advisory Council subcommittee developing the Oregon LSTA Five-Year State Plan accepted the State Librarian's proposal to establish LSTA Benchmarks to assist in evaluating the use of Oregon's LSTA funds. One of the LSTA Benchmarks is "the percentage of Oregonians served by a public library that meets minimum service criteria" - the same library benchmark described in this article. When the Council and State Library Board were

adopting the LSTA Five-Year State Plan and the LSTA Benchmarks, it was expected that LSTA competitive grants submitted under certain LSTA priorities would advance the number of libraries meeting the library benchmark.

State Library staff delivered a report about the current library benchmark progress report to the State Library Board at their December 4, 1998 meeting. Board interest in developing some strategies for increasing the number of libraries meeting the library benchmark surfaced. The State Librarian and Library Development staff engaged in some planning discussions with a Board representative. On January 22, 1999 they made a report to the LSTA Advisory Council, and sought the Council's interest in developing a special LSTA Benchmarks grant program. The Council encouraged the development of a draft application packet to review at their May 25, 1999 meeting.


THE LIBRARY BENCHMARK AS A PLANNING TOOL

Local library leaders can use the library benchmark as a tool for improving service in their communities. The specific criteria that are not met by a local library can be targeted in planning sessions, and strategies developed for how the library might satisfy them. Short-term strategies to move a library from underserving citizens to adequately serving them may include incremental budget increases, a volunteer program (including training) for providing children's programming, fund development efforts for enhancing the library's basic support, and, applying for grants, particularly if an LSTA Benchmarks grant program is offered. Ideally, the planning effort will also identify major governance and funding changes to accomplish as the means to move service to citizens into the excellent level. 

Ten Years and Growing


(continued from page 3)

Goal No. 1 of the National Education Goals states: *By the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn.* Too many children are coming to kindergarten lacking the language and cognitive foundation necessary for school success. Busy, stressed parents do not spend sufficient time talking, reading, singing or interacting with their children. Child care providers are often under-educated and under-trained for the vitally important work they do. Early childhood is the critical time for brain devel-

opment. Adults must recognize their role and responsibility in a child's development. Influencing the attitudes and behaviors of one adult can impact the children in that adult's circle and many more children to come. As we begin the twelve month countdown to the year 2000, the goal feels much too large but the goal keeps us moving forward. *Early Childhood Resources* has made great strides in the past ten years and will continue to support adults through training, resources and inspiration. 

Service to Residents

(continued from page 7)

Pierce Library staff is committed to eastern Oregon libraries and the patrons they serve and will continue to provide access, as well as the physical resources, as long as funding permits and the need exists in eastern Oregon. 

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Serving the Minority

(continued from page 10)

profit agencies, and a library of approximately 1300 volumes) will soon be available for use by students and scholars. The Community History Center has presented two symposia, the "Jackson Forum" an annual event featuring presentations of scholarly papers on selected topics relating to African American History. One Jackson Forum presented papers on the Vanport Community, the disastrous flood of 1948 and subsequent relocation of African Americans in the Portland area. Future symposia will focus on minority employment in the Portland area and on displacement of minority neighborhoods by the Portland Coliseum, Lloyd Center and the Emanuel urban renewal project. The Center has also collected more than fifty oral histories, other collections of historical documents and newspapers, and has the promise of personal papers from other notable African American leaders in Oregon, including Margaret Carter (recently retired from the Oregon legislature), and State Senator Avel Gordly.

The Community History Center has received support from Portland Community College, the community,

and grants from the Black United Fund, Oregon Community Foundation, and Kaiser Permanente.

The Center, in addition to other recent publications and projects, greatly expands the available base of information about the African American experience in Oregon, and fills in many missing particulars about the history of the area. Materials may be accessed by appointment. Future plans include Internet access but that is not envisioned for the next biennium. 

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Check out the Children's Services Division web site at www.olaweb.org/csd/ for division events, activities and information, or to download the 1999 Summer Reading Program artwork and order your ReadQuest materials.